

# A Comparison of Primary Care Providers' Focus Group Results and Survey Results

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## Background

The **Utah Arthritis Program (UAP)** conducted research to assess the knowledge, attitudes and beliefs of medical providers with respect to arthritis management and resources. This study was comprised of focus groups and a mail survey to supplement the results obtained at the focus groups.

Results from previous research with women aged 40-64 regarding arthritis knowledge, attitudes and beliefs indicated these women viewed physician recommendations as critically influencing their decisions regarding the use of arthritis resources and the Arthritis Foundation Self-Help Course (ASHC). The women further stated, however, that their medical providers offered little information about these resources.

## Methods

*The Primary Care Provider (PCP)* research included two components:

- focus groups
- mail survey.

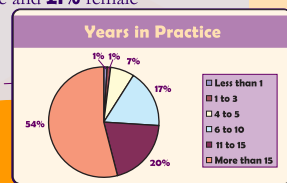
### Focus Groups

- Five, two-hour **focus groups** comprised of PCP's including nurse practitioners (NP), physician assistants (PA), and physicians were conducted.
- The **NP and PA groups** were composed primarily of females (**67%**) and most had practiced medicine for less than 10 years (**83%**). The **physician groups** were composed primarily of males (**85%**) and most had practiced medicine for over 10 years (**70%**)

### Mail Survey

- A **34-question survey** was mailed to 567 PCP's during August 2002. Of those, **158** surveys were completed (**27.8%** return rate).

- **79%** male and **21%** female



## Comparison

*The primary focus group findings were that participants:*

1. had a very low **"top of mind"** awareness of arthritis resources
2. felt **"hopeless"** about treating those with arthritis
3. had a desire for **additional information** about resources that could assist their patients
4. would be more likely to recommend the ASHC if they received **positive feedback** from patients who had taken the course.

*The mail survey findings concur with the focus groups in two areas.*

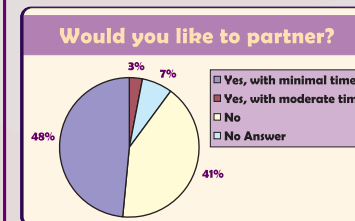
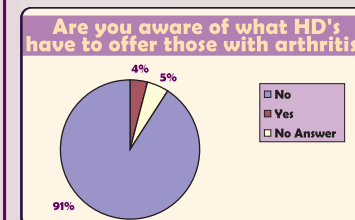
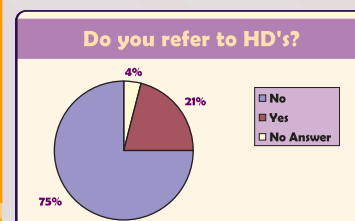
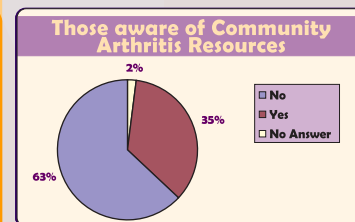
1. The PCP's have very low **"top of mind"** awareness of arthritis resources,
2. They have a desire for **additional resource information** to assist their patients.

*They differ in that:*

1. Mail survey participants **did not** seem to feel as **"hopeless"** as the focus group participants in treating those with arthritis.

## Results

### Additional Items of Interest



## Future Direction

It is clear that physician awareness of community and health department arthritis resources is lacking. The UAP will provide information to increase awareness of arthritis resources among physicians.

The UAP will also continue to **collaborate** with Intermountain Health Care to identify effective, evidence-based physical activity and weight loss programs to meet the needs of their patients for whom providers recommend these interventions.

